

The Shadows on the Screen

THERE is nothing more wonderful, more incredible, and at the same time, as it seems to me, more certain, than that past events may leave a record upon our surroundings which is capable of making itself felt, heard, or seen for a long time afterward.

I have put the impressions in the order of their frequency, for it is more common to feel the past than to hear it and more common to hear it than to see it.

Houses which are haunted by vague noises are more common than those which possess apparitions, and families have been persecuted for years by poltergeists who have never once caught a glimpse of their tormentors.

A SENSITIVE mind is easily affected in any place where there has been recent trouble. A lady of my acquaintance called recently upon the matron of a hospital and found that she was not in her room.

"Mrs. Dodson has gone out," said the nurse.

"Has she had bad news?"

"Yes, she has just had a wire that her husband is very ill."

How did my friend know that there had been bad news? She felt it by a sinking of her own heart as she entered the room, before the nurse had arrived. "Telepathy," says the parrot. Well, if telepathy can be stretched to mean that a thought or emotion can not only be flashed from brain to brain, but remain stationary for an hour and then impress itself upon any sensitive who approaches it, then I will not quarrel with the word. But if for an hour why not for a year, and if for a year why not for a century?

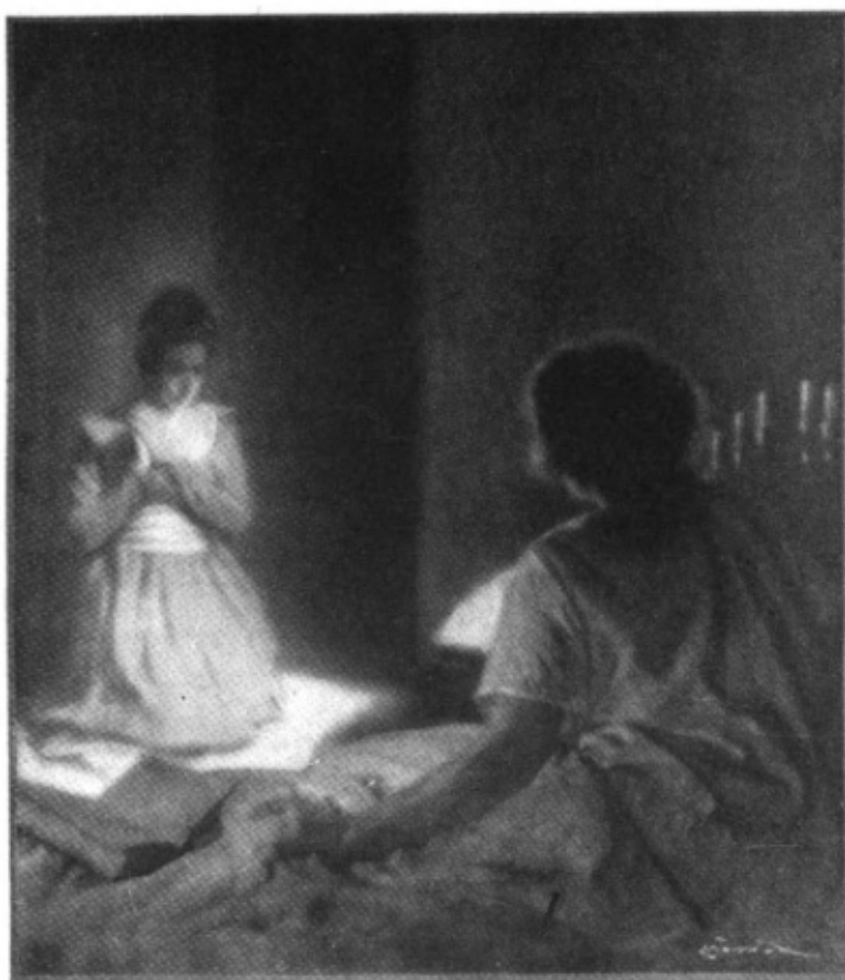
There is the record on the screen—that this particular little cubic space of ether, if Professor Einstein will still permit the expression, shall retain indefinitely some intimate and lasting change which marks and can even faintly reproduce the emotion which a human being has endured within it.

I HAD a friend who lived in a century-old house. His wife, who was sensitive, was continually aware of a distinct push when she came down the stairs, always occurring upon the same step. Afterward it was discovered that an old lady who had formerly lived in the house received a playful push from some frolicsome child, and lost her balance, falling down the stair.

It is not necessary to believe that some hobgoblin lingered upon that stair continually repeating the fatal action. The probable explanation seems to be that the startled mind of the old woman as she felt herself falling left some permanent effect behind it which could still be discerned in this strange fashion.

Invisible air records of this sort would explain many things which are now inexplicable. Men of strong nerve have been known to be terrified in certain localities without being able to give any reason. Some horror of the past, unseen by their eyes, may still have impressed their senses. One does not need to be very psychic to get the same result upon an old battlefield.

I am by no means psychic myself, and yet I am con-



True Ghost Stories-V By Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

The Woman Who Prayed The Man With Powdered Hair The Captive Lady

scious, quite apart from imagination, of a curious effect, almost a darkening of the landscape with a marked sense of heaviness, when I am on an old battlefield. I have been particularly conscious of it on the scenes of Hastings and Culloden, two fights where great causes were finally destroyed and where extreme bitterness may well have filled the hearts of the conquered. The shadow still remains.

A more familiar example of the same faculty is the gloom which gathers over the mind of even an average person upon entering certain houses. The most rabid agitator need not envy our nobility their stately old castles, for it is happier to spend one's life in the simplest cottage uncontaminated by psychic disturbance, than to live in the grandest mansion which still preserves the gloomy taints which hang about rooms once perhaps the scene of cruelty or other vices.

I F a sensitive is able to feel some record of a past event, then there is evidence that by an extension of this process one who was still more sensitive would actually see the person who left the impression. That it is the actual person in spirit is in most cases utterly incredible to me.

That the victim of some century-old villainy should still in her ancient garments frequent in person the scene of her former martyrdom is, indeed, hard to believe. It is more credible, little as we understand

the details, that some thought-form is shed and remains visible at the spot where great mental agony has been endured. How and why, are questions which will be solved by our descendants.

If we could conceive that we have form within form like the skins of an onion, that the outer skin should peel off under the influence of emotion, and continue a mechanical existence at that spot while the rest of the organism passed on and never even missed it, such a supposition, farcical as it appears, would match the recorded facts better than anything else I know. Each fresh-discarded skin of the onion would be a fresh thought-form, and our track through life would be marked in its more emotional crises by a long trail of such forms. Grotesque as the idea may seem, I can confidently say that the true explanation when it arrives will prove to be not less so.

L ET us now take some definite examples of the manifestation of this thought-form.

I do not know a better case than that which is recorded by the late Miss Goodrich-Freer, a lady who combined a steady nerve and cool judgment with a temperament which was conservative to the point of incredulity. She slept in a room in Hampton Court Palace which had a record of haunting and she tells us very clearly what occurred.

No unprejudiced person could possibly read the original narrative without being absolutely convinced that the facts were even as stated.

It was a small bedroom without curtains, with one door close by the bed. It is characteristic of the lady that she spent her vigil—she had come in the hope of seeing the apparition—by reading Lord Farrer's article, "Shall We Degrade Our Standard of Value?"

In spite of the reading, or possibly on account of it, she fell asleep, and was awakened some hours later by sounds of movement.

It was quite dark and some detaining force seemed to prevent her from reaching for the matches. A question received no reply.

Suddenly there appeared a soft point of light in the gloom, which glowed and spread, until it became the figure of a tall, slight woman, moving slowly across the room. She stopped at the farther side and the observer was able to get a clear view of her profile.

"Her face was insipidly pretty, that of a woman from thirty to thirty-five years of age, her figure slight, her dress of a dark soft material having a full skirt and broad, sash or waistband tied high up, a crossed or draped kerchief over the shoulders, sleeves which, I noticed, fitted very tight below the elbow and hair which was dressed so as not to lie flat to the head."

A second question addressed to this figure produced no effect. She raised her thin white hands, sunk upon her knees, buried her face in the palms, and appeared to pray. Then the light went out and the scene was over.

THE impression left upon the observer's mind by the action and attitude was that of reproach and yet of gentle resignation. Her own nerves were so entirely unaffected by the (Concluded on page 69)

of practically all the regular forms. Indeed, this business helped to give me a good start when I opened my own office.

"By and by I not only became a busy practitioner of the law but was steadily adding to my resources. Bit by bit I acquired some 2,500 acres of farming land. I also increased my property holdings in Wheaton, my native township, until by the time I was in my early thirties I was the largest property-owner there."

As Judge Gary's earnings and investments increased, however, it was inevitable that his mind should turn more and more to business matters. His counsel began to be sought by corporations. Financiers quickly discovered that he not only knew law but knew business. His acumen as a financier drew influential corporate and capitalistic clients to him. From advising others how to conduct their affairs, it was an easy and logical step for Mr. Gary, now resigned from the bench, to undertake the formation and direction of an enterprise of his own. His first venture in this direction, as already told, was the formation of a steel company.

That proved the stepping-stone to the chairmanship of the largest industrial organization in the history of the world, the United States Steel Corporation.

The magnitude of Judge Gary's position almost passes comprehension. The Steel Corporation's gross earnings last year approximated \$1,500,000,000, and in the two previous years were even larger. It contrib-

uted to the Government \$1,000,000 every week in taxes last year and an average of \$5,000,000 every week in 1915 and 1917. Its properties are now valued at fully \$2,500,000,000. Its surplus is over \$600,000,000.

Judge Gary is head of a larger army of employees than the peace-time army of the United States. Notwithstanding the slackening of business last year as compared with the two previous years, its employees exceeded 250,000. The average daily wage paid was \$6.17. The total wage bill was the largest on record, \$480,000,000.

NO MAN ever before held so responsible a job. The gross earnings of the company Judge Gary heads are greater than the income of the United States Government was in any year before the war. Its financial operations, indeed, are on a scale exceeding those of all but a few countries of the world.

Judge Gary would be the first to acknowledge that he could never have piloted so tremendous a leviathan of industry had he not been fortunate enough to find capable aides. From James A. Farrell, president, all through the ranks of executives, the Steel Corporation is noted for the ability of its men. Said the Judge on this point:

"Yes, the fact that a man has managed his own affairs in such a way that he has accumulated a balance on the right side of his ledger weighs in his favor when I am con-

sidering the question of promotion. Waste has ruined many an enterprise. The man who has learned the value of economy, who has consistently practiced saving, and who has exercised good judgment in using his own funds is more likely to prove the right kind of executive than the man who has had no regard whatever for such matters."

IT WAS with the idea of encouraging his company's employees to become savers and investors that Judge Gary years ago assisted in inaugurating a plan permitting the workers to subscribe for Steel shares on attractive terms—a plan which has been taken advantage of by upwards of 50,000 wage-earners.

I would like to add that there are available today more attractive bargains in bonds and investment stocks than there have been at any time since the financial upheaval of 1907. When bonds and notes of companies like the Pennsylvania Railroad can be purchased to yield 7½ per cent or better, and stocks like the preferred issue of the Steel Corporation can be bought at a figure yielding approximately seven per cent, every individual owning investable capital should immediately get into touch with a reputable banking or investment house with a view to picking up some of these exceptional bargains. Even Liberty Bonds can be bought at ten to eighteen per cent under the price at which they will be repaid by the Government.

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incident that she has left it on record that she spent part of the remainder of the night in reading Myers's "Drift of Psychical Research."

Such an experience, and it is one of a very numerous class, can hardly be explained rationally upon any spiritual or upon any physical basis. Granting the fact, and there is no sane alternative but to grant it, we can not conceive that this unfortunate woman has really, for a century or more, occupied herself in walking across a room in which some great trouble may have befallen her in her earth life. From her appearance one would judge that she was more sinned against than sinning. Why, then, should any just dispensation condemn her to so strange, monotonous, and useless a fate?

If we can conceive, however, that it is some shadow of herself which was detached in old days of trouble and still lingers, then certainly the matter becomes more clear, if she herself is happy elsewhere. Such a shadow, like most psychic phenomena, might well seem luminous to one who, like Miss Goodrich-Freer, had herself some clairvoyant gifts.

If you ask, however, why such a thought-form should come only at certain hours, I am compelled to answer that I do not know.

A SIMILAR first-hand example may be drawn from Mrs. Tweedale's recent book "Ghosts I Have Seen," which under its popular title contains a most extraordinary record of actual first-hand psychic experiences.

Mrs. Tweedale is an admirable witness, for she, like Miss Goodrich-Freer, is herself clairvoyant and yet retains a very sane and critical judgment, while her personal reputation and position give us every confidence in her statements.

Materialists will never fairly face the obvious alternative that such first-hand accounts either mean that a person of honor has suddenly burst into a perfect orgy of objectless lying, or else that the statements are true. When a clairvoyant can clearly describe her own experiences the book becomes of great value, and I would name only Turvey's "Beginnings of Seership" among the more recent works as equalling Mrs. Tweedale's in personal knowledge.

The writer at one time lived in an old house in the West End of London. It was a winter night and she was lying half asleep when she heard a sound as of the crackling of parchment and, opening her eyes, she saw a man seated in a chair in front of the fire.

He was dressed in a uniform reminiscent of Nelson's days, with brass buttons, and was staring rigidly into the glow, while he held crumpled up in his right hand some sort of document. He was a stately and handsome figure.

For some hours he sat there, the fire gleaming, when it spurted up, upon the buckles and buttons of his dress. Finally in the small hours of the morning he vanished gradually away.

Several times later the lady saw the same apparition, and it might well be argued that it was constantly there but that its perception depended upon the condition of the clairvoyant. Finally some religious exorcism was performed in the room and the vision was not seen again. This case clearly fits itself into the hypothesis advanced here, of a form picture being thrown out at a time of emotion. The parchment document suggests a will or some other paper of importance which the officer has prepared or received, but which in either case may have caused him so much mental stress as he

earth life such a man must have had, it is difficult seriously to consider it.

AN EXPERIENCE which comes under the same heading is narrated by Lady Reay in the same enthralling volume. She was sleeping in an ancient dwelling with a somewhat sinister reputation, so we may admit that her mind was prepared to see a ghost. The actual form of the phantom was so definite, and so exactly similar to that seen by independent witnesses at different times in the same room, that it could hardly be a figment of the brain.

She was awakened by moaning. The room was in total darkness, but at one side was a circle of light, like that thrown by a magic lantern. This seems to be the psychic illumination, as seen by Miss Goodrich-Freer in the case already quoted. Several clairvoyants who habitually see it, describe it as being of a metallic yellow.

In this circle of radiance was seen a woman dressed as in the Tudor period, walking round the apartment, throwing herself occasionally against the wall, like a desperate bird in a cage, and moaning terribly. There was no record, so far as I know, as to who this unhappy lady may have been, but she was seen independently before Lady Reay saw her, and without Lady Reay's knowledge, by Captain Eric Streatfield when he was a little boy.

I do not understand how one can disregard such testimony as this. Such incredulity may be described as scientific caution, but to those who are really aware of the weight of evidence now existing it must appear mere obstinacy and obtuseness. When one thinks of the importance of psychic knowledge, and compares it with that of the bending of the light from the Hyades as it passes the sun, one can but marvel at the want of proportion which exalts the physical while it neglects the spiritual.

IN ALL these cases there has been only one figure thrown upon the screen, but the matter becomes more complex when there is a group. This group consists in many cases of the wronger and the wronged, but as each may have been at the same pitch of emotion at the time of the deed, the theory of thought-forms being shed at such a time is not invalidated—and is at any rate more reasonable than to imagine that the guilty murderer and the innocent victim are involved in one common fate which consists of an endless repetition of the tragedy which they once enacted. Such an idea seems to me a monstrous and unthinkable one.

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